

# REMARKS

ON AN

## ADDRESS

TO THE

PEOPLE called **QUAKERS**:

AND A

## SERMON

ON THE

NATURE and NECESSITY of  
being admitted into COVENANT with  
CHRIST by BAPTISM:

PUBLISHED BY

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In a LETTER to the AUTHOR,

By S. FOTHERGILL. *K*

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To which are added a FEW OBSERVATIONS,

By J. PHIPPS.

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The SECOND EDITION.

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*He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that Circumcision which is outward in the Flesh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and Circumcision is that of the Heart in the Spirit, and not in the Letter.*  
Rom. ii. 28, 29.

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REMARKS

AND

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STORY

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# REMARKS

ON

AN ADDRESS, &amp;c.

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MY FRIEND,

**A**S it hath pleased thee to publish an Address to the People called QUAKERS, on the subject of WATER-BAPTISM, I determined to put myself in the way of information, as one of that people, whom thou beggest to peruse it; and accordingly have read and considered it with proper attention.

I acknowledge thy candour and justice, in believing that it is not thro' any disregard or contempt of God's word or will, that we neglect to be partakers of the rite of baptism. — I also fully approve thy advice, and have for many years determined to pursue this invariable rule of conduct; *viz*, "After a due and serious examination of the Scriptures, judge for ourselves;" and "obey and be directed by the Word of God, and put not confidence in man." A freedom and privilege these nations are favoured with, and which it is our duty humbly and wisely to improve; as it is not from positive assertion, hasty censure, or coercion, but from evidence, that the understanding is convinced.

The temper of mind in which thou writest, hath an agreeable place with me: and as thou art pleased to call upon any one, plainly to declare our sentiments, I accept the call; and take this occasion to inform thee, that thy arguments are not attended with that clearness and conviction as to warrant my assent thereto. I have searched the Scriptures diligently, and I hope honestly; but have not found any thing therein sufficient to induce me to confide in thy conclusions: Which, as they seem drawn from mistaken, or very doubtful premises, and are certain in nothing but their uncertainty, I cannot adopt as a rule of my faith.

The principal foundation of thy argument for Water-baptism, seems laid on a supposition of its being a token of the covenant of God in Jesus Christ; and its analogy to circumcision, as being a token of the old covenant.

That circumcision was a token of God's covenant with Abraham, and his seed after him, I hesitate not to acknowledge. It was commanded in the most express terms; the mode of administering it was directed with circumstantial precision; as every positive institution of God hath ever been; that no doubt or uncertainty might remain, to perplex the minds of mankind.

If the model of the Ark, the particulars of the Sanctuary, and every minute appendage thereto, even to the Pins of Brass, were delivered by the Almighty in the most explicit manner, as we find they were; and if we ought to consider them only as *typical*; how much more may we firmly trust (as life and immortality are now brought to light by the Gospel) every essential of salvation must in Holy Writ be attended with those indubitable proofs of institution, which are  
worthy

worthy of a God perfect in wisdom and goodness in all his dispensations.

As the covenant in Jesus Christ is the most glorious that ever was dispensed from God to man, both with respect to its Minister and end; we may justly suppose every essential thereof to be set forth and enjoined with at least equal clearness to that with Abraham, and the manner of administering it to be rendered altogether as evident.

The practices of the several professors of the Christian faith, who retain this rite, are so various, and even thyself so indeterminate and lax, with respect to the mode, and Holy Scripture so silent in the case, as to render the continuation of it, to my understanding, a matter of ceremony, and not of divine institution.

I have two passages to adduce in support of this remark. One, from the SIXTH of the THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES of the Church of England, where I thus read: Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith; or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

The other is from thy own words (*Address page v. and vi.*) "Whatever is necessary to be done by a disciple of Christ, is so plainly declared in the Gospel, that a careful and unprejudiced reader may fully know his duty in all things."

I do not find in any part of the Holy Scripture, either precept or example for the present practice of sprinkling infants.—As I read it not therein, nor think it can be proved thereby, I admit it not as an article of my faith, nor believe



lieve it necessary to salvation.—And from the authority of thy own testimony, as it is not plainly declared in the Gospel, it is not necessary to be done by a disciple of Christ.

If any such proof, or plain declaration, could be produced in support of sprinkling infants, it would have been long ere now produced, by those who have continued the practice of that ceremony. The present advocates for it would not be reduced to the necessity of *presumptive arguments*, and *uncertain consequences*; such as the supposition *that there were Children, in the household of Lydia, the Gaoler of Philippi and Stephanus*, [SERMON, page 26.] nor of asserting that the manner of administering an essential of salvation is left undetermined, for us to *judge of as well as we can*. Page 31, 32.

From the titles accompanying thy name, I conclude thee to be a member of the present Church of England as by law established, and of consequence in the practice of sprinkling infants; which must be deemed, in thy opinion, the proper method of administering that rite; otherwise thy quotation from *Rom. xiv. ver. 22.* will be conclusive against thee: “Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.” Thy want of precision in thy Sermon, with respect to the mode, renders it more tedious to attend thee thro’ the subject; but if practice declare the judgment, sprinkling of Infants is thine.—Thou concludest, that “Water-Baptism may be properly administered in any decent and convenient manner whatsoever.” Page 33.—Pray who must be the judge of this decency and convenience? Any thing subjected to human decision, with respect to decency and convenience, wants, in my judgment, those characters of divine institution, which become

come the religion of the Holy Jesus; which is  
 “ not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of  
 “ man, but of God.” *John* i. 13.

A quotation from the Holy Scriptures in thy  
*Address*, hath great weight with me; viz. the  
 curse pronounced on that man, who teaches any  
 other doctrine than that delivered therein. I  
 have searched them diligently, but I cannot find  
 sprinkling of infants therein established, or any  
 precept or example for that practice.

I think thy profession of great regard for the  
 Holy Scriptures, manifestly contradicted by thy  
 curtailing and mutilating of them in various  
 places; suppressing their important design, and  
 perverting their sense. It is indeed so flagrant  
 as to merit notice; and seems to result from a  
 supposition, that few people read the Scriptures,  
 and therefore many will take a false quotation  
 upon trust.

Page vi. of thy *Address*, we have these words;  
 “ They (*i. e.* the Scriptures) are said to be able  
 “ to make a man wise unto salvation.” For  
 which, 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. is quoted. It is very disin-  
 genuous to close the paragraph thus quoted with  
 a period; when the Scripture immediately adds,  
 “ thro’ faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Thou representest the text as ascribing saving  
 wisdom to the Scriptures: *They* ascribe it to  
 Faith in Christ Jesus.

The Scriptures are an excellent favour, and  
 worthy of our reverent attention; and we have  
 great cause to be thankful to God for preserving  
 them to us. But I hope I may safely say, as  
 was wrote of John Baptist; “ They are not that  
 “ Light, but sent to bear witness of that Light.”

That they may be read, yea searched, un-  
 availably to the end for which they were im-  
 parted, is evident from *John* v. 39, 40.

There

There immediately follows an attempt to impose upon the reader, by giving a pretended quotation from *Gal. i. 8. 9.* in these words; “ If any man teach any other doctrine than what “ is delivered in those Scriptures.”

There is no such expression in the place referred to. And indeed but few of the Epistles to the churches, which constitute an excellent part of the Holy Scripture, were then wrote.

I concur with thee, that the covenant God made with Abraham, and his seed after him, was preparatory to that other covenant, which he had before determined to make with, “ all “ nations, and all people;” and that circumcision was a token of that covenant; which was figurative, and typical of that to which it was preparatory.

I have little objection to make to thy remarks concerning that covenant; and therefore proceed to that by which salvation is now attainable; “ The covenant of God in Jesus Christ.” To which the prophets, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, bore abundant testimony.

Thou art pleased to give us a part of the prediction of Jeremiah concerning this event. I wish the whole had been inserted; as the various parts of this prophetic description of the new covenant are equally true, and equally expressive of its nature and design. And as an article of my faith, I will give the whole, as there is no part of it to which I cannot fully subscribe.

“ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,  
 “ that I will make a new covenant with the  
 “ house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:  
 “ not according to the covenant that I made  
 “ with their fathers, in the day that I took them  
 “ by the hand, to bring them out of the land  
 “ of



“ of Egypt (which my covenant they brake,  
 “ although I was an husband unto them, saith  
 “ the Lord). But this shall be the covenant  
 “ that I will make with the house of Israel;  
 “ after those days, saith the Lord, I will put  
 “ my law in their inward parts, and write it in  
 “ their hearts, and will be their God, and they  
 “ shall be my people. (*And they shall teach no  
 “ more every man his neighbour, and every man  
 “ his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they  
 “ shall all know me, from the least of them unto  
 “ the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for*) I will  
 “ forgive their iniquity, and I will remember  
 “ their sin no more.” *Jerem. xxxi. 31, &c.*

Can we have any reason to suspect thy mutilation of the text was, designedly, to conceal the purport of the Gospel-covenant, as the diffusion of saving knowledge, through Jesus Christ, to men of all conditions; and that it should not become the peculiar exclusive privilege of any order, or hierarchy of men, to make merchandise of it?

Whatever might be thy intention in this omission, it is evident, the preaching of that which some call the doctrine of Christ, is upon another foundation than that which he established; and the inducements to such preaching do not bear the indubitable tokens of the motions of the Holy Ghost.

I firmly believe the above quotation from the prophet Jeremiah, contains the purport of the Gospel-covenant, and is accomplished in the experience of such as are partakers therein.

To this covenant many of the prophets bear ample testimony, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Also the apostles, in many parts of their Christian labours, particularly the Author to the Hebrews, *chap. viii.* hath reference

to these predictions and characters, and applies them to the covenant in Christ; yet not one word of Water-baptism, as a token thereof, is mentioned, either by the prophets or apostles.

It is to me very evident, that that inspired Author considered this covenant to be independent of any exterior rite, as an instituted token thereof. He recapitulates the ceremonies and rites under the former covenant, *Heb. ix.* remarking the incapacity of those ritual acts, to make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation, *ver. 9, 10.*

Though these typical sanguinary offerings were applied and sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, and rendered expiatory of sins, and through the gracious condescension of the Almighty, as such accepted; yet they were far short of the anti-type "the covenant of God in Jesus Christ, and the blessed effects and value thereof," *ver. 14, 15.*

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the First Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Not a word of Water-baptism as a token of that covenant.

As all types had a reference to something to come, they were consequently abrogated, when the anti-type appeared. Thus the sacrifices of the old covenant, referred to the sacrifice of Jesus

sus Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and totally ceased in point of obligation, when the one great offering, which fulfilled them, was made.

That Water-baptism is a token of the Christian covenant, still remains to be proved. Thy attempt to find proof is, in my apprehension, very deficient, mostly consisting of assertions, which vulgar prejudice and tradition have induced many to take for granted. But as the Christian religion will bear the nicest scrutiny into all its parts, and it was noble in the Bereans to search the scriptures, to try the consistency of the doctrines of the apostles therewith, I hope modestly to use that privilege, to follow thy good advice, and "judge for myself."

If we consider the mission of the disciples, to preach the Gospel of Christ, in the terms thou hast quoted, I can see no sort of proof for Infant-baptism; but the contrary evidently appears. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned," *Mark* xvi. 15, 16.

"Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them *in, or into*, the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world! Amen." *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20.

In both these accounts of the mission of the disciples, it may be observed the imperative force lies upon, *go ye, and preach; go and teach*; and further, this gracious assurance is added; "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!" Through the efficacy of



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"Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them *in, or into*, the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo! I am with you *always*, even unto the end of the world! Amen." *Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.*

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his presence with them, they became able ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; and were made thereby instrumental to baptize with the Holy Ghost, and pricked thousands to the heart. This converting baptism of soul into the belief of the gospel of Christ, and subjection to its sanctifying energy, is to this day the proper entrance into discipleship. In both commissions, belief, and being taught, are previous to baptism. That infants are capable of neither, is out of doubt. And if we will not subscribe to the grossest absurdities, we must allow none can believe by proxy.

Another testimony against the validity of Infant-baptism ariseth from thy own words, page 19 of thy *SERMON*, where I thus read; "For though baptism, if it be properly received, with faith in Christ, and desiring to have part with him, cleanseth to the washing away of sins: yet without these, it is altogether ineffectual to that purpose." — Now as infants are absolutely incapable of these dispositions, can neither have faith nor desire, baptism is ineffectual to them; which invalidates at once the claim of a great part of the professors of Christianity, to the covenant in Jesus Christ.

Thy quotation from *Mark* x. 14. seems to me to operate strongly against the cause it was produced to support, (i. e.) sprinkling infants. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God, *ver.* 15. "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein," *ver.* 16. "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

Here



Here is, First, A declaration of that innocence and simplicity of heart in children, which is necessary for us to know, in order to our entrance into the covenant of God, and the kingdom of his dear Son. And, Secondly, A recital of the whole transaction: he took them up in his arms; he laid his hands upon them; he blessed them. Had he sprinkled water upon them, or dipped them therein, or commanded any other to have done it, and declared it to be the manner of entering into his holy covenant, it would have proved something. As he did none of these things, but declared "of such is the kingdom," it is a strong negative proof against the practice.

Page 22. we are told, "that neither the sincere faith in Christ, nor the most open declaration of that faith: neither the gifts of the Holy Ghost, nor what may be called the baptism of the Spirit, manifested by the undeniable evidence of speaking with tongues, and prophesying: neither the calling nor election of Jesus Christ, though signified in the most miraculous manner (as in the case of Saul), that none of these will entitle any one to the benefits of the Christian covenant, without their being also admitted into that covenant by the baptism appointed by Christ, as the token thereof."—What this baptism is in thy judgment, thy practice demonstrates: the sprinkling water on the face of infants or adult persons; the former of whom cannot from thy own testimony, be proper subjects thereof. Permit me now, in my turn, to call upon thee plainly to declare, who it was that baptized the primitive companions of our Lord? He called them from their several occupations, and sent them forth to preach the gospel, and work miracles,

racles, without being previously baptized with water by him. He in them, and they in him, made clean through his Word. Were they, or were they not, entitled to the benefits of the Christian covenant? If they were, it was thro' the calling of Christ, and the power of the sanctifying Word; for, that they were initiated by him into the Christian covenant, by the use of elementary water, is taking for granted what the Scripture positively contradicts. "For Jesus baptized not." *John iv. 2.*

Mary Magdalen was an eminent instance of divine power and clemency; as were many others recorded in the New Testament. Had their title to the Christian covenant depended on Water-baptism, they would no doubt have been clearly referred to it. But there is not a single instance of our Lord directing any seeking soul, that applied to him, to any such means. But, in pursuance of the design of his incarnation, he laid the axe to the root of corruption; to destroy the works of the devil, and bring in the righteousness of an everlasting covenant.

Was the penitent thief on the cross entitled to the benefits of the Christian covenant, when its Holy Author declared, "this day thou shalt be with me in paradise?" If he was, please to consider thy doctrine, that neither the sincerest faith, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, nor the election of Christ, &c. will entitle any to the benefits of the Christian covenant, without Water-baptism. If he was not entitled to the benefits of the Christian covenant, how came he to enter with Christ into Paradise? Thy assertion, that our Saviour administered Water-baptism to his apostles with his own hands, appears to me not founded on Holy Writ; which positively says, "he baptized not."

If

If he, by the act of washing his apostles feet, instituted Water-baptism, the circumstances of that act are particularly expressed; therefore not left undetermined. What right have any, who believe this to be the institution of Christ, to vary from it, and to substitute a method void of example or precept in Holy Scripture?

Our Lord's positive declaration ought to be decisive in the point: that it was intended as an example of humility; that as he, their Lord and Master, had washed their feet, they ought to imitate his example, in every act of brotherly kindness and condescension. *John* xiii. 12. "So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them; Know ye what I have done to you?"

*Verse* 13. "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well, for so I am."

*Verse* 14. "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

*Verse* 15. "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

*Verse* 16. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him."

*Verse* 17. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

As they had been subjects of the act, they knew the act; but not the end proposed, until he fully declared it in the manner above-related.

This was, in the Holy Jesus, an act of humility, and irksome to the pride of many who call themselves his regular successors; but are very unlike him, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister to others.

Peter



Peter knew not the intention of his Lord and Master in washing his feet, until it was explained to him by the doctrine referred to as above. When he was converted, and restored to a capacity to strengthen his brethren, we find him calling to repentance and baptism. *Acts* ii. 38. Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be *baptized*, every one of you, in the name of "Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye "shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." What was intended hereby, is further illustrated, *Acts* iii. 19. "Repent and be *converted*, that "your sins may be blotted out." Hence it appears, the apostle intended the same thing by the word *baptized*, in the first; as he did by the word *converted* in the last.

The arguments from the apostle Peter's practice of Water-baptism, appear not to me so considerable as many imagine. Upon his visit to Cornelius, and preaching Christ to him, Peter's mentioning water appears to be in consequence of some previous motion made by another: for, it is said, then *answered* Peter, &c. *Acts* x. 46. Also in the case of the Eunuch, who was returning from Jerusalem, where he had been to worship; when Philip, by divine command, joined himself to his chariot, and preached Christ to him; we do not find that Philip impressed on his mind the necessity of that exterior rite, as the terms of admission into the Gospel-covenant. The Eunuch first proposed the matter, and received an answer from Philip in such terms as by no means establish Water-baptism as an essential; "If thou believest with "all thine heart, thou *mayest*"—not *must*.

As Water-baptism had been in use amongst the Jews long before the coming of John the Baptist, or the appearance of the Messiah; and  
that

that people had been accustomed to a multiplicity of ceremonies, they may be considered as tenacious of some exterior rites, and not willing, even after they were convinced by the authority of the Gospel-ministry, to embrace the religion of Jesus Christ in its perfect simplicity and spirituality, discharged from all external appendages. They endeavoured to mingle Judaism and Christianity together. It seems also to have consisted with infinite wisdom, to make gracious allowances to that people in their first emancipation from Jewish bondage, while yet clouded with prepossession in favour of exterior shew. Thus even circumcision was practised by the apostle Paul, on Timothy; yet a few years after, he declared to the Galatians, "if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing," *Gal. v.*

2. Certain of the Jewish proselytes were so bent on retaining their shadows and ceremonious rites, as to trouble the primitive church, particularly the Gentile converts, with endeavours to subject them to circumcision, the token of the old covenant; it therefore became necessary for the apostles and elders to hold a general conference at Jerusalem, where the Holy Ghost presided amongst them, by whose influence they imparted suitable counsel, and relieved the Gentiles from the yoke of the former covenant, *Acts xv.*

Had Water-baptism been an essential of the covenant in Christ Jesus, this seemed a most suitable time to have enjoined it, as a necessary introduction thereto, and a standing institution of God. When the Judaizers at that time insisted, (*Acts xv. 1.*) "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved;" had Water baptism been intended to remain in the place of circumcision, the apostles would certainly then have acquainted

them with it, and would not have failed to have impressed it upon them, as such, in the most plain and positive terms; and could not in this place, have totally omitted the mention thereof, as they indisputably did; which evidently demonstrates, it was no part of the injunction which it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to the apostles and elders, to lay upon Christian believers; and may thence be justly concluded to be no part of true Christianity.

We shelter not ourselves under any evasion, in our hopes of being entitled to the Christian covenant; but we believe in all those things which Christ hath appointed, and made necessary thereunto.

We declare our belief in the testimony and dispensation of John the Baptist, of our blessed Redeemer, of the Holy Ghost, and of the primitive believers. If we dissent from Water-baptism, and the sprinkling of infants, as a token of the covenant in Jesus Christ, it results from our fear to add to the gospel institutions. We look upon Water-baptism as the baptism of John: And that it was not to be established as a token of the Christian covenant, is evident from his own testimony. *Matt. iii. 11.* "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

*Verse 12.* "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

*MARK i. 7.* It is said, "he preached, saying, there cometh one mightier than I, after me; " the



“ the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy  
 “ to stoop down and unloose.”

*Verse 8.* “ I indeed have baptized you with  
 “ water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy  
 “ Ghost.”—Which we find repeated, *Luke* iii.  
 16, 17. *John* i. 6. to 20. The similarity of  
 the expressions by the several evangelists, is an  
 indication of a fundamental truth.

John clearly appears to have considered his  
 administration as temporary, and to give way  
 to the brighter dispensation and superior excel-  
 lency of the Prince of peace, whose kingdom  
 is without end. John was but the fore-runner  
 of Christ, to point him out, and then to be  
 superseded by him. He alledged he had need  
 to be baptized of Christ; who answered him,  
 “ Suffer it to be so now; for so it becometh us  
 “ to fulfill all righteousness,” *Matt.* iii. 15.  
 which is further set forth in *Luke* iii. where we  
 have the amplest account of John’s ministry that  
 the New Testament gives us; it extended first  
 to the multitude, *ver.* 7. then to the publicans,  
*ver.* 12. then to the soldiers, *ver.* 14. He takes  
 this opportunity of the people’s expectation  
 and musing, to preach Christ’s baptism, distin-  
 guished from that of which he was the minister.  
 In *ver.* 21. we have the account of John’s bap-  
 tism and ministry, in these expressions.

“ Now when all the people were baptized,  
 “ it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized,  
 “ and praying, the heaven was opened, and the  
 “ Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like  
 “ a dove, upon him; and a voice came from  
 “ heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved  
 “ Son; in thee I am well pleased.”

Hence we may gather the meaning of our  
 Lord’s words, “ For thus it becometh us to  
 “ fulfill all righteousness.” John’s ministry was

figurative of the ministry of Christ; being a divine institution; and as such it had its typical righteousness.

Similar to this is Christ's submission to circumcision, and the rituals of the Law, which had also their typical righteousness. And the memorable circumstance of our Lord's Transfiguration conveys implicative proofs of the abrogation of those ceremonious institutions, which were introductory to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For, when Moses and Elias, or (as is generally understood) John the Baptist, appeared with him, it is said, "he was transfigured:" Tho' indeed his humble state in the body was his state of transfiguration; and the excellent glory which shone upon him was his real state, as the eternal Son of God. — Moses and Elias passed away; but he remained; and the voice from the excellent glory proclaimed him the Son of the Highest. And by his remaining, and the testimony of the voice from heaven, he was declared to be the Minister of the Everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.

This seems to be the most probable conclusion that can be drawn from our Saviour's submission to Circumcision and Water-baptism; as no power or authority could be thereby conveyed to him, in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily.

Having fulfilled the righteousness of God in the former dispensations, he immediately entered upon his ministry, was led into the Wilderness, and felt the affliction and temptation incident to that state of being he came to reconcile to God.

HEB. ii. *ver.* 16. "For verily he took not  
"on him the nature of angels; but he took on  
"him the seed of Abraham,

*Ver.*

*Ver. 17.* "Wherefore in all things it behoved  
 " him to be made like unto his brethren; that  
 " he might be a merciful and faithful high-  
 " priest, in things pertaining to God, to make  
 " reconciliation for the sins of the people.

*Ver. 18.* "For in that he himself hath suffer-  
 " ed, being tempted, he is able to succour them  
 " that are tempted.

*Chap. iv. ver. 14.* "Seeing then that we have  
 " a great high-priest, that is passed into the  
 " heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold  
 " fast our profession.

*Ver. 15.* "For we have not an high-priest  
 " which cannot be touched with the feeling of  
 " our infirmities; but was in all points tempted  
 " like as we are, yet without sin.

*Ver. 16.* "Let us therefore come boldly unto  
 " the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy,  
 " and find grace to help in time of need."

It remains now to consider this ministration of Christ, and its certain effects, which will give us a proper understanding of the necessity and manner of entering into covenant with him by baptism.

On the most serious examination of the nature of the Christian covenant, according to the testimonies prophetic and descriptive thereof, it appears to be that spiritual dispensation manifested at that time of reformation the apostle alludes to, *Heb. ix. 10.*; the typical washings and figurative rites of the Mosaic Law having served as a schoolmaster to bring unto Christ, *Gal. iii. 24.*

This covenant in Jesus Christ is spiritual in all its parts; which is evident from the terms mentioned in *Jeremiah xxxi. Heb. ix.* and from a cloud of witnesses. The evangelic prophet Isaiah abounds with references to the Messiah, and his offices; both expiatory, as the Lamb slain,



*chap. liii. and operative, to reform; particularly chap. iv. ver. 13.*—"Instead of the thorn (saith " he) shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of " the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree; and " it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an " *everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off.*"

I suppose we do not hence expect any such change upon the face of this earth; but allow it to have a spiritual meaning; which is explained by the angel to Joseph, *Matt. i. 21.* " And " she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call " his name Jesus; for he shall save his people " from their sins."

The holy Jesus testifies to this work, from his first publishing the Gospel, as two of the evangelists declare, *Matt. iv. 17. Mark i. xiv.* He preached repentance, " for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" *i. e.* the gracious accomplishment of the purpose of God in the redemption of mankind from sin and transgression, the cause of the curse.

That the apostles believed this to be the time of reformation, and Jesus Christ the means, we have the most unquestionable testimonies, *Titus ii. 14.* " Who gave himself for us, that he might " redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto " himself a peculiar people, zealous of good " works." And *1 John iii. 8.* For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he " might destroy the works of the devil."

I am very sensible strong prepossessions and prejudices are against me: For few think deeply enough about matters, which nevertheless are of everlasting importance.

But I claim belief only in proportion to the consistency of what I advance with the truth as it is in Jesus, and with the Holy Scriptures. A few short propositions therein contained, familiar

miliar and self-evident, give us a clearer insight into the Christian covenant, than all the study and wisdom of men; which hath generally perplexed plain truths, by pressing them into the service of imagination and particular systems; throwing over them the veil of mystery, and substituting Opinion instead of Faith.

- 1st. " We have all sinned, and come short of  
" the glory of God. *Rom.* iii. 23.
- 2d. " No unclean person hath any inheritance  
" in the kingdom of Christ and of God.  
" *Ephes.* v. 5.
- 3d. " Except a man be born again, he can-  
" not see the kingdom of God. *John* iii. 3."

As these propositions are the language of Truth itself, they are not liable to be disputed, nor their authority called in question; and I hope to make no inferences from them inconsistent with their genuine meaning.

For the truth of the first proposition I appeal to every man's experience. — The inaptitude and disinclination of mind to divine things, and repugnance to heavenly affections, so fatally prevalent over the many, in whom evil affections, and the obvious fruits of impiety resulting therefrom, deplorably abound, furnish incontestable proofs of a deviation from that state of rectitude, in which the creation stood in the beginning; when " God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good." *Gen.* i. ver. 31.

There are different degrees of defection amongst men; but Infinite Wisdom and Purity beholds all included in these expressions, " All flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth." *Gen.* vi. 12.

The second proposition is built on the unchangeable nature of things. There never can be any agreement between contrary natures : Neither time nor eternity can reconcile God and Belial. And while corruption prevails in any, they cannot inherit incorruption. This leads us to the appointed means, " Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

What the apprehension of many is, respecting this birth, I find expressed in the doctrines set forth in the Office of Baptism in the Catechism ; viz. " That the child, being born in original sin, and in the wrath of God, is now, by the laver of regeneration in baptism, received into the number of the children of God, and heirs of everlasting life."

Again ; the child is taught to believe it was therein made " a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." These are unquestionably the fruits of the baptism of Christ with the Holy Ghost. But that sprinkling infants produceth these effects, is by no means evident to my understanding.

I see no necessity of entering here into the doctrine of Original Sin ; but I cannot subscribe my assent to that position, That children are born in the wrath God. I rather choose to adopt thy sentiments, page 26, " That we have sufficient evidence of the favour of Christ toward them."

The Redemption of mankind is not built on God's hatred, but love to the world. *John* iii. 16. 17. " For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world



“ world to condemn the world; but that the  
 “ world through him might be saved.”

That the seed of iniquity is disseminated thro’ all human nature, is an obvious truth! But that it is imputed to any, until they have made it their own by willingly embracing it, seems to me irreconcilable with His attributes, whose ways are equal.

Where there is no law, there is no transgression. — That infants are incapable of a law, is evident. — Consequently to them no transgression can be imputed.

The baptism of Christ is in order to purge the conscience from dead works. But infants are utterly incapable of this; having no consciousness of evil to be purged from.

The baptism of Christ is with the Holy Ghost and fire. For his Word is as a fire, to cleanse from the pollutions of the world, to wash us in his own blood, and present us to the Father without spot or wrinkle.

To this the prophets bore testimony, that he should be as a refiner and purifier of silver, *Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 3.* And we find many other places of Holy Writ immediately pointing out this recovery of mankind, by the spirit of judgment and burning.

As the kingdom of Christ is holy, the members thereof are holy: And nothing can make us so, but the effectual baptism of the Holy Spirit.

To make the tree good, is the business of religion. And it must be so before the fruits can be good, in the unerring estimation of the Judge of quick and dead.

The primitive believers, with one voice, acknowledged this truth. Were I to bring in all the proofs of it which are contained in their writings, I might transcribe the greatest part of  
 D them.

them. I would just mention a few, and those particularly expressive of the baptism of Christ, and its effects.

ROM. vi. *ver.* 3. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death."

*Verse.* 4. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

COL. ii. *ver.* 11. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands; in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ."

*Verse* 12. "Buried with him in baptism; wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

1 PET. iii. *ver.* 21. "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

1 COR. xiii. *ver.* 13. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

They attributed their being made members of Christ, to what is elsewhere allusively called "the washing of water by the Word;"—even that same water which he gives; and is "a well of water springing up into everlasting life," *John* iv. 14:—This expresseth the spirituality of that water, wherein is the ablution from sin: For elementary water cannot rise beyond its nature, and spring up into everlasting life.

By this sanctifying and cleansing water of the Word, the primitive believers were made members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. *Ephes.* v. 26 and 30. They became children or sons of God by a power they received from him. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name," *John* i. 12.

*Rom.* viii. 14. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

*Ver.* 15. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

*Ver.* 16. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

*Ver.* 17. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

*GAL.* iii. *ver.* 26. "For ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

*Ver.* 27. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."

Hence it appears they became children of God by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. By which I understand such a thorough immersion into his holy nature, as to know him, the only-begotten Son of God, to conform the soul to his own image.

Thro' the indwelling of that quickening Spirit which is called the Seed of God, these children are raised from a state of transgression, and overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil.—They rest not in a formal, verbal renunciation of the devil and all his works, the pomps and va-



nities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; but stedfastly aspire after that state the apostle thus describes; "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his Seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John iii. 9.

This is certainly the privilege of the children of God; who being thus made children, of consequence become heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

The relation of redeemed souls to the kingdom of heaven, is strongly expressed in the term *inheritance*; which implies a possession descending in the right line, and received by heirship: to which none are or can be intitled, but as related to the family in which such possession is vested. The apostle, writing to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse, confirms this remark; *chap. i. ver. 12.*

"Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

*Ver. 13.* "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

*Ver. 14.* "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

*Ver. 15.* "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature."

*Ver. 16.* "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him."

*Ver. 17.* "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

*Ver,*

*Ver. 18.* “ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead: that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.”

*Ver. 19.* “ For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell.”

This was the joyful experience of the primitive believers in Jesus Christ, and of such in succeeding ages, who are his followers in the regeneration. — For man by nature hath no more meetness in himself under the Christian profession, than under Jewish bondage or heathenish idolatry. The sole good is applied to us, and wrought in us by the effectual operation of that Spirit and Power, which in this, as in former ages, translates out of darkness, into the kingdom of the dear Son of God.

This is the baptism of Christ; the baptism which now saves; and without which salvation is not attainable.

The miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost in the apostles days, enabling to speak with tongues, and work miracles, may have in a great degree ceased; as the necessity of such proofs of the Gospel power seems removed, by the reception of the Christian doctrine amongst many nations. But whatever was necessary to the redemption of the first Christians, whatever spiritual experience they attained in the work of salvation, as individuals, is still as necessary for all now to know, as it was to them. There being no other way to have fellowship with them, and to know our fellowship to be truly with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, 1 *John* i. 3.

At the same time we testify to this baptism of the Spirit, as an inward sanctifying work, illuminating the mind, rectifying the judgment and animating the affections; we derogate not,  
in

in the least, from the glorious appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh. We fully believe every tittle recorded concerning him, respecting his divinity, miraculous incarnation, holy humble life, blessed doctrine, his suffering for mankind, that by his stripes we might be healed; his resurrection, ascension, mediation, and that God by him will judge the world.

We can never so profitably attend to the history of the Holy Jesus, as when our spirits are brought, by the energy of his baptism, into the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable to his death. Then the awaking of the sword against the Shepherd (*Zech. xiii. 7.*), is awfully understood, the price of our purchase, and its end, appears with proper weight and instruction. *1 Cor. vi. 20.* "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." *1 Peter i. 17.* "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."

*Verse 18.* "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers;"

*Verse 19.* "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot."

From abundant testimonies I therefore conclude, it is the baptism of Jesus Christ, and that only, which makes members of Christ; children of God; and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven: and that Water-baptism, in what form soever administered, is not that baptism, nor required as necessarily introductory thereto; and that the sprinkling of infants is utterly destitute of any proof of divine institution; and as such I leave it, with this remark:

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The laying stress on human inventions, hath often been fatally injurious; and this particular circumstance hath furnished many proofs of it, to my certain knowledge. Many have apprehended themselves, by the act of sprinkling, made what they were taught to believe that sprinkling effected for them, and the work of salvation consequently wrought out; and have, when reproved for obvious iniquity, sheltered themselves under their supposed initiation into the covenant in Christ, and title to his merits; mistaking the most powerful call to every possible degree of holiness, and acting as if they had a toleration to crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and to put him to open shame.

Thy three Queries proposed, page 24, upon a satisfactory solution whereof thou layest a considerable stress, merit some notice.

1. *When* baptism ought to be administered, so that it may duly and properly admit a person to a title to the benefits of the Christian covenant? After a course of reasoning, to little purpose, and quoting Scriptures remote from thy argument, thou concludest, "that we may truly say, children may be admitted into the church of Christ by baptism, before they come to years of discretion." But page 19, thou givest it as a positive truth, that baptism is altogether ineffectual, if not *properly received* with faith in Christ, and desiring to have part with him. Here is a manifest incoherence and contradiction; unless thou wilt assert infants are capable of faith and good desires, before they come to years of discretion. Therefore the *when* remains yet to be ascertained.

2. *By whom?* Thy answer, page 29, tells us, "that as it hath pleased God to continue a regular succession of ministers in the church of Christ, none can properly baptize, but those who have received a regular commission for that purpose." Here allow me to query, whether the church of Rome was, at the reformation, acknowledged by the reformers to be the church of Christ; and the ministers therein to be regular successors to the apostles? If they were not, there must be a chasm in the succession, and a deficiency in the title of the present ecclesiastic establishment, to uninterrupted succession from the apostles. If the Romish community was the church of Christ, and their ministers regular successors to the apostles, doth not this involve all those who left it, and protested against its principles as erroneous in many parts, in a most dangerous schism, and render their state lamentable? Such contradiction is irreconcilable with the character of the church of Christ, who is undefiled, and but one, the only one of her mother, the choice one of her that bare her. *Canticles* chap. vi. ver. 9. Query in what manner, is left very much in the dark: thou tellest us, page 28. "that when our Lord had baptized his twelve apostles, he told them he had given them an example, that they should do as he had done unto them." The example he gave them, was washing their feet; and if this was the institution of a baptism to be always continued in the church, the mode in every respect is as certain. But thou tellest us we must judge *as well as we can, it is left undetermined*, and it may be administered according to our convenience.

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Such manifest inconsistency in all these answers to thy own queries, is rendered still more striking, by the additional query, put with an air of exultation and triumph, (*i. e.*) “ Can more clear  
 “ and satisfactory answers be required to be  
 “ given to any questions that admit of a debate,  
 “ than those we have been enabled to give from  
 “ the scriptures to those questions we had stated?  
 “ When? by whom? and in what manner? is  
 “ baptism to be properly administered and re-  
 “ ceived?

I think, instead of the words *clear* and *satisfactory*, we may safely substitute *confused* and *dissatisfactory*; and that they carry along with them evident marks of self-contradiction and weakness.

And to all who have no other ground of hope in the covenant of Christ, and to be partakers of his gracious promises, than being sprinkled with water in their infancy, there remains something to be effected, before they can rejoice in the consolation which will remain through time to all eternity.

To conclude; “ If any man be in Christ, he  
 “ is a new creature:—Old things are past away;  
 “ behold all things are become new, and all  
 “ things are of God.” 2 *Cor.* v. 17, 18. “ They  
 “ that are Christ’s, have crucified the flesh with  
 “ the affections and lusts,” *Gal.* v. 24. All trusts and dependencies short of this, or of an humble invariable pursuit after it, are worse than merely insignificant, however specious in exterior shew, or supported by the grandeur or wisdom of this world, or followed by the croud. They are some of those intoxicating ingredients in the cup of fornication, wherewith the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk, and slept with a lye in their right hand.



May the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, hasten the day, wherein every mystery of abomination shall become desolate; and, through the baptism of the Holy Jesus, his dominion spread from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth, is the ardent prayer of

Thy sincere Friend,

And Well-wisher,

Warrington, 26th of  
the First Month,  
1761.

SAMUEL FOTHERGILL.

ADDENDA,

## A D D E N D A.

**H**AVING been favoured with the perusal of the foregoing Address, from my friend Samuel Fothergill, to the Author of the Sermon that occasioned it; and perceiving it is not intended as a minute examination thereof, but rather to shew the Author the weakness of his reasoning in the general, and chiefly to remind him of the sufficiency of the Essential Baptism of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, without the unavailable continuation of material water; I found an inclination to add a few observations in relation to the subject.

In the 28th page of the Sermon, the Author tells us he hath shewn, that “Christ gave them” (the apostles) a commission to baptize all nations: and that when he had baptized them, he told them he had given them an example, that they should do as he had done unto them; that is, baptize others, and give them a commission to baptize also.”

The commission he takes from *Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.* The example from *John xiii. 4. &c.* and seems to place them in the preceding order, that the first may be understood as antecedent, and the last as consequent. Whereas, in the first place, Our Lord’s washing the feet of his disciples, did not follow his delivering this verbal commission to them; — for that act was performed some time before his Crucifixion; and the commission was given after his Resurrection.

These transactions therefore, being wrongly stated, exhibit an untrue representation of the case.

2dly, These texts differ in the doctrine apparently intended to be inculcated by each of them. The direct and genuine sense of that in *John* xiii. is clearly expressed in the 14th and 15th verses. “ If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed  
“ your feet, ye ought also to wash one another’s  
“ feet : For I have given you an example, that  
“ you should do as I have done to you.”

Hence it appears he was not instituting, or administering Water-baptism; nor shewing, by that means, how to introduce others, not yet of his church: But he was giving his disciples, who were already of his church, an example of that humility, brotherly kindness, and condescension, which the meek nature of the Holy Spirit would lead them into; and shewing them that this must be the path of his followers, and the manner of their conduct mutually towards one another.

As therefore this text of *John* xiii. relates to the practice of the disciples amongst themselves, and that of *Matt.* xxviii. to their duty respecting others; they cannot properly connect in the same line of doctrine, nor be rightly produced as proofs of each other; and, in consequence, the conclusions drawn from them by this author, are improper and unwarrantable. He must therefore excuse persons of plain understandings, if they should not prefer his forced and sophistical meaning to our Lord’s clear explanation of his own act: For such cannot help thinking, that he who is justly styled the Wisdom of God, knew his own intention, and how to express it, at least as well as the Prebendary of Litchfield; and must have been altogether as free from partiality,



tiality, as he could have no bias of interest in the case.

I am of opinion some other texts of scripture will connect much more pertinently with that of *Matt. xxviii.* than the *xlith* of *John.* For instance:

“ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations;  
 “ baptizing them in (or *into*) the name of the  
 “ Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy  
 “ Ghost; teaching them to observe all things  
 “ whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I  
 “ am with you alway, even unto the end of the  
 “ world.” *Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.*

“ And being assembled together with them,  
 “ *he* commanded them that they should not de-  
 “ part from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise  
 “ of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard  
 “ of me: For John truly baptized with water,  
 “ but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost,  
 “ not many days hence.” *Acts i. 4, 5.*

“ Ye shall receive power after that the Holy  
 “ Ghost is come upon you (or, according to the  
 “ marginal correction, *the Power of the Holy*  
 “ *Ghost coming upon you*) and ye shall be witnesses  
 “ unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea,  
 “ and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts  
 “ of the earth.” *Act i. 8.*

“ And when the day of Pentecost was fully  
 “ come, they were all, with one accord, in one  
 “ place. And suddenly there came a sound  
 “ from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind,  
 “ and it filled all the house where they were  
 “ sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven  
 “ tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each  
 “ of them. And they were all filled with the  
 “ Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other  
 “ tongues,

“tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

*Acts* ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

These texts follow properly in point of time, apparently belong to the same subject, and afford light to each other: Shewing,

1. That our Lord, after his resurrection, delivered to his disciples a verbal commission; but not present ability to perform it: so that it was rather prophetic, or representative of the real Gospel commission which he intended to bestow upon them, than the thing itself.

2. That he did not authorize them to go forth immediately in the service of the Gospel by virtue of these words, *Go ye, &c.* but commanded them to wait at Jerusalem, for the promise of the Father.

3. That this promise was that of his own baptism, by the Power of the Holy Ghost.

4. That the real commission and qualification for the ministry of the Gospel, was the effect of this inward, spiritual, and powerful baptism.

5. That this was the primary publick introduction of the One True Christian Baptism; and that it was neither accompanied with the administration of water, nor any other ceremony whatsoever; but with a solemnity, different in kind, and abundantly superior to all human performances; and was essentially experienced by the servants of Christ, whilst they, with one accord, were sitting and humbly waiting in obedience to his command.

Thus the issuing forth of the Gospel, thro' the first evangelical ministers, began in an united meeting; wherein the disciples were waiting, most probably in awful stillness before him, for the fulfilling of his promise: and having therein received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it, according

according to promise, became their Comforter, Instructor, and Leader; and hereby they knew they were become the children of God: For, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God," *Rom. viii. 14.* And such, and only such, are the true heirs of that promise of our Lord; "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Henceforward, when they were engaged in the service of the Gospel, they found him, accordingly, to be with them in Spirit, enabling them to *teach, baptizing*: That is, thro' the powerful influence of the spiritual Baptizer being upon them, and accompanying their words, to baptize the spirits of the believing hearers into the Name, the inward Life, Power, and Virtue of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; in order that, by receiving the Divine Visitation, and cleaving to it, in its own pure love, they might come to be born of that which is from above, and thereby be made heirs of the kingdom.

The words of the apostle Peter (*Acts xi. 15, 16.*) furnish a clear proof of this observation. "As I began to preach (saith he) the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."

Thus he *taught, baptizing*; according to the terms of the verbal commission. And we need not be at a loss to determine what baptism our Lord intended by those terms, if we also consider that the apostle Paul, when touching upon Water-baptism, declares (*1 Cor. 17.*) "Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." That is, not to baptize with water, but to *teach, baptizing*, by the powerful influence



ence of the Holy Ghost. For it cannot be denied, that his part in the Gospel-commission, respecting the essentials of Christianity, was altogether as extensive as that of any other Christian minister.

The baptisms of the Jewish Law were of an outward nature, agreeable to the dispensation they belonged to: And the baptism of the Gospel, which is the Power of God unto salvation, is of the same spiritual nature therewith; being witnessed in and by that power, and not otherwise. It may therefore most consistently be concluded, that the baptism intended in *Matt. xxviii.* is that of the Holy Ghost, which is Christ's; and not that of Water, which was John's. And tho' the latter afterwards continued to be practised at times by some of the apostles; as also did circumcision, the observation of vows, anointing with oil, and divers other ceremonials of the abrogated law, and customs of the Jews; yet doubtless this, as well as they, was intended to decrease, and fall by degrees into disuse, as the people, too much attached to exterior shew, could be brought to see beyond it, and to bear its removal.

To treat circumcision as a type of Water-baptism, resolves into this absurdity; that one image was instituted to be the type of another image; or to be the shadow of a shadow; with this addition, that the stronger was the type of the weaker; and that the more expressive and outwardly perfect under the Law, was to point out the less expressive and more imperfect under the Gospel. For circumcision left a real mark of distinction upon the body of the circumcised, and might therefore be figuratively called a seal: But that cannot be asserted of Water-baptism, which leaves not the least apparent trace or sign upon

upon the body : and that it makes any virtuous impression upon the mind, remains for those who press it as essential, to prove.

'Tis true, circumcision was a type ; but not of water-baptism ; for that was also a type ; and both, with the figurative term Fire, center'd in shadowing for the efficacy of the Holy Ghost in the work of regeneration ; which lays the axe to the root, circumcising the heart, as the knife did the foreskin ; washing the soul, as water does the body ; and refining the spirit, as fire doth silver.

It may also be rationally concluded, that to establish the sprinkling of infants, as a matter essential to their happiness, is to make their receiving of God's salvation to depend upon a meer ceremony ; upon the place of their birth ; upon the will of those who may have the care of them ; or, it may be, upon the carnal interest of one, whose practice demonstrates he hath not the charity to administer what he professes to be a necessary introduction to endless felicity, without a lucrative consideration.

The Lord God Omnipotent, who is Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness in perfection, is the Creator, Preserver, and Father of all ; whose mercies are over all his works ; who is no respecter of persons ; and who, by his inspired apostle, hath declared, he is not willing that any should perish ; but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter iii. 9.) : how irrational and absurd is it to suppose, this incomparably just, and most excellent Being, would cause the salvation of any to depend upon such precarious tenures, as that it might be prevented by the carelessness, obstinacy, ignorance, prejudice, or carnal interest of others ! Or that he should tack it to the performance of

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a ceremony, which the impotent and unconscious infant could neither help nor hinder !

Christ is given for a leader, as well as a commander to the people (*Isa.* lv. 4.) ; and those who are led into the heavenly house, by the Master of the house, have no need to keep an eye to the sign for direction. And such as make use of the sign, must, notwithstanding that, look for the door, or they cannot enter. For all the reasonings and injunctions of men can never prove the sign to be the door ; though that seems to be the principal view of this Author's Sermon. "I am the door, saith our Lord ; by me  
 " if any man enter, he shall be saved," *John* x.  
 9. " He that entereth not by the door into  
 " the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other  
 " way, the same is a thief and a robber." *John* v.  
 1. A strong expression from the Lip of Truth himself, worthy of the serious consideration of all.

He also, to call mankind from looking for salvation any longer through outward observations, saith (*Luke* xvii. 20, 21.) " The kingdom of God cometh not with observation ;  
 " neither shall they say, lo ! here, or lo ! there ;  
 " for behold the kingdom of God is within  
 " you." Where should we look for it then, but within ? Our worthy predecessors having happily found it there, frequently expressed that needful exhortation, *mind the light within* ; which they knew shined, at times, in the dark hearts of the unregenerated part of mankind ; tho', as saith the apostle *John* i. 5. " the darkness comprehended it not." For both teachers and hearers joined in reviling it, and reflected upon them, as Fanatics and Enthusiasts, for bearing testimony to it, speaking evil of what they knew not ; the veil being over their hearts when they  
 read



read (*John* i. 4.—9.) “ In him was life, and the  
 “ life was the light of men ; and that he was  
 “ the true light, which lighteth every man that  
 “ cometh into the world.”

Ever since the commencement of the gospel-dispensation, it hath been a most successful artifice, practised upon mankind, by the subtil enemy of their felicity, to fix their attention upon, and keep their zeal employed in, the support of symbolical acts and resemblances of good things, as essentials of Christianity ; whereof they are no part ; for, it is a debasement to the glorious Gospel, to treat forms and shadows as essential to that which consists not in form, but in power ; and in sacred writ is stiled, the Power of God unto salvation. The reality whereof is only to be known by the inward effectual operation of the Holy Spirit, purifying from evil both in root and branch, and producing its own genuine fruits in the heart ; as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c. (*Gal.* v. 22, 23. and *Ephes.* v. 9.)

For nothing but what is good can produce good ; and there is none inherently good but One, and that is God ; therefore none but he can produce those fruits which are really good. Where they are produced, the finger of God is manifest ; and who is he that condemns whom the Lord justifies ? True Christians are not so rightly to be distinguished by modes of profession, or the practice of particular forms, as by the good spirit and temper they live and walk in, and the good fruits arising therefrom. And many of us know by experience, these excellent dispositions and practices are neither introduced, nor assisted, by those things which never were more than figures for the time then present, and

are not now to be insisted on : for generally in whomsoever they are zealously embraced, they prove obstructions to the soul's advancement in the virtue of truth.

It is a melancholy consideration, that abundance of religious-minded people are so unhappily misled, and bewildered in a round of outward performances, under the specious name of *duties* ; while their precious and irredeemable time might be much better employed, and their zeal more profitably exercised, in an inward attention upon God in spirit ; humbly waiting, in awful stillness of mind, before Him, who alone can work all our works in us, and without whom we can do nothing.

It is not the talk of a new-birth ; nor any imaginations of its being begun by external observances, and wrought insensibly ; nor the vain fancy of the imputation of a righteousness unwrought within ; that will avail to any better purpose than that of self-deception ; which must end in confusion and misery.

Our Author (Page 29.) having espoused the notion of a regular succession of ministers, descended from the apostles, in a right line, to himself and his brethren of the church of England ; by whom, he is pleased to imagine, the Gospel-commission hath been traditionally handed down, from one to another, to the present time ; it appears to me requisite to bestow a few observations upon the subject.

1. Whom God, by his Spirit, immediately calls into the ministry, are his ministers. Whom he, by his inspired servants, instrumentally calls, are also his servants. Whom man of himself, without the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit for that end, calls, are not called of God, but of men ; and are not properly God's ministers,

sters, but man's. No external acquirements, nor any forms of ordination, can render the case at all otherwise than it is in its own nature. No human acts or inventions can make man's call to be God's call, any more than it can make man to be God.

Those who are not sent by Christ, but by men, are the servants of those that send them; who are undeniably their masters. For they not only authorize them to go forth; but confine them to a certain system and method, by which their doctrine and practice, in their ministry, are to be directed; and, in case of disobedience, have power to degrade and deprive them of their delegated authority; which demonstrates whose ministers they are. Their general conduct likewise apparently denotes it; the body of them, some particulars excepted, having turned with every change of the state, from Popery to Protestantism, and from Protestantism to Popery, since the time of Henry VIII. And notwithstanding the noise they have made, through all their changes, with the sounding word, *Orthodox*; their constantly applying it to whatever gained the ascendant, is a proof their true meaning in it, is no other than what we understand by the word, *uppermost*; and the reason is plain: the revenues inseparably attend it. How vain the pretension of divine right is in ministers thus constituted, I think, need not be further pointed out; especially as those of the best understanding amongst the national ministry are ashamed of the plea.

2. The ministers of Christ must be of his own making. An eminent one hath told us (*Heb. v. 4.*) "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Thus the primitive ministers were called, and sent



sent forth by our Lord himself; but that he authorized them, by what he said to them, to commission others, and those others to commission others to the end of the world, I in no part of holy writ can find.

3. In order to establish this point of a regular succession, it is necessary for its assertors to produce record thereof from the plain text of the New Testament; and also to prove, from authentic history, that it hath never suffered interruption since.

This hath been attempted, but never accomplished, so far as my information reaches; nor, I presume, never can be; for it is evident to me, the current of true Christian succession runs not in forms and outwards; but in the spirit and life of religion. The real successors of the apostles must have, if not the miraculous powers which attended them, at least an apparent share of the same virtues, the fruits of the Holy Spirit, which were conspicuous in them. They must have the same Spirit, preach the same disinterested doctrine, and live the same self-denying life. And as our Saviour told some presumptuous Jews (*John viii. 59.*) "If ye were the children of Abraham, ye would do the works of Abraham;" so it may be said to many of our modern professors; if ye were the successors of the apostles, ye would do the works of the apostles.

"Ye shall know them by their fruits," saith our Lord, (*Matt. vii. 16.*) Those, in the tenour of whose life and conduct the fruits of the flesh manifestly appear, cannot be of the same line with those who walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Such as walk after the Spirit are the true Christians, whether they are sprinkled or not; and such as walk after the flesh are not true

true Christians, let who will sprinkle them: for, it is not the priest by water, but Christ by his Spirit, that maketh real Christians; and in his Spirit alone is the true succession; which is derived immediately from himself, and not thro' the loins of Popery, or any other corrupt line of descent. It is certainly a gross absurdity, and an high indignity to the Lord of all perfection, who saith to the wicked (*Psa.* l. 16.) "What  
 "hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or  
 "that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy  
 "mouth?" to suppose, that he should make use of the defiled channels of superstition, idolatry, and persecution, as conveyances for the glorious Gospel of peace and unchangeable purity.

To conclude, if the Christian covenant is to be entered by, and regeneration doth necessarily and insensibly attend, or follow, the administration of Water-baptism, how broad and easy is the way that leads to life! How flattering to flesh and blood, so averse to mortification, self-denial, and the daily cross! But let none deceive themselves, nor suffer themselves to be deceived, by such vain imaginations. The Gospel-covenant is spiritual, and its entrance spiritual. "I will  
 "put my law in your inward parts, and write  
 "it in your hearts," *Jer.* xxxi. 33. This is the new covenant, whereof the administration of outward water is no more a part, than the administration of outward fire. Nor can any sort of men, by any thing they can do, either effect or introduce it. It is the pure act of God in man; and, like the true Gospel-ministry (*Gal.* i. 1.—11, 12.) is neither of man, nor by man. The inward experience of which, through the goodness of God, we have been favoured with, in some degree, without the help of man, and  
 this

this hath been the ground of our dissent from others; not affectation of singularity, pique, or prejudice against those of any other societies, or their ministers. But having tasted of the good Word of life, we bear testimony to it, and, notwithstanding the scorn and abuse we frequently meet with, in print and otherwise, from the ignorance of some, and the malignity of others, we cease not, sincerely to wish salvation, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, to every individual of mankind.

J. PHIPPS.

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